The thieves' guild: when and how it originated.

It is believed that it began to form in the 1930s.

But the thieves' guild appeared much earlier. After the abolition of serfdom, freed peasants were granted civil rights, but their only means of subsistence was the land belonging to the landowners. Many moved to cities, where there was also no work for them. There was only one way to survive: theft, robbery, and extortion.

The reforms of the 1860s and 1870s marked the beginning of the development of widespread organized crime. The country was experiencing a serious political, economic, and social crisis and, as a result, a weakening of power.

At the end of the 19th century, a significant event in the history of the thieves' world took place: the creation of the First St. Petersburg Thieves' Assembly. It was the first formally organized thieves' council that developed thieves' laws.

Criminals, for the most part illiterate people, would not have been able to form such a complex system of the criminal world. The system was created by literate and educated people, who were not found in the Russian criminal world.

One of the first organized criminal groups was the Jewish merchants, a sect that had existed since the end of the 18th century. However, these immigrants from poor Jewish towns were illiterate and could not only formulate but also understand many provisions of thieves' law.

This was done by German Jews who emigrated to Russia.

In the second half of the 19th century, German Jews were granted full civil rights and, albeit limited, access to education.

In the Middle Ages, a secret language called Lashon Hokhma or Hokhmer-Lashon emerged in the Jewish diaspora in Germany, which was used by thieves, beggars, pimps, vagrants, and gypsies to communicate with each other.

During the years of reform in Russia, a large number of Jewish adventurers arrived from Germany, often educated people who were involved in fraud and extortion, and it seems that they created the basic provisions of the thieves' code.

The main prohibitions of the thieves' code:

Murder was prohibited because the Torah says, “Thou shalt not kill.” A thief in law could order a murder, but did not have the right to do it himself

- **Any interaction with representatives of the authorities, informing or giving testimony is prohibited.**
- **A thief must not participate in politics.**
- **A thief must not work.**

· **Not to have any property**

· **Not to wear expensive jewelry**

- **Not to have a family, wife or children.**
- **It was forbidden to steal from “your own” (other members of the criminal world) or to deceive them.**
- **Unprovoked violence:** For disorderly conduct in the territory entrusted to him, a thief could be “de-crowned” — that is, stripped of his status as a thief in law and transferred to the lower rank of “men.”
- **Prohibited use of profanity**
- Within the “thieves' guild” there was a principle of complete democracy. There was no supreme authority in their environment. Decisions were made by a council where each authority had the right to their own opinion.

The thieves' brotherhood, in many ways, resembled a monastic order

Thieves-in-law did not accept the sinful world, just like monks in a monastery, and, like monks, they called each other brothers.

Like monks, they were religious and followed the biblical commandments. The 10 commandments of Moses were the basis of the thieves' way of life. “Proper thieves” identified themselves with the first Christian communities, which did not accept the generally accepted ideology and way of life.

Like monks, they did not seek to accumulate personal wealth and lived off the communal fund.

Like monks, they took a vow of celibacy.

Like monasteries, which received tithes from the state, thieves in law taxed the population 10 percent of their income, or according to the Torah, “tsedaka” — 1/10 of income, which usually went to the community, which then distributed the funds to those in need.

FENYA

It is believed that the thieves' dialect originated in Odessa, as the majority of Jews lived there at that time.

Although the language of Russian shtetls is used in fenia, for the most part it is German Yiddish - lashon khokhma or khokhmer-loshen, which merged with the language of the ofen (Jewish itinerant traders).

In 1892, a special manual and dictionary of slang words of Jewish origin was published for police officers.

Fenya dictionary

FENYA “to speak in fenya” (*ביטאי באופן*, “*bitui befen*”) means to speak in a special way that is only understood by one's own kind

FRAER (from *Frej*, “*freedom*” in Yiddish - a person outside the criminal world. A simpleton who can be deceived

BLAT - “leaf” - a letter of recommendation confirming that the applicant enjoys serious protection. Authority and the person who enjoys it - BLATNOY

BOTAT (from *בטא*, “*to talk, to express oneself*” in Hebrew, pronounced ‘bate’)

MALINA (from *מלון*, “*hotel*” in Hebrew, pronounced “*malon*”) - a secret refuge for one's own people.

HEVRA (from *חברה*, “*firm, company*” in Hebrew, pronounced “*hevra*”) - a gang or any criminal syndicate.

HALAVA (from *חלב*, “*milk*” in Hebrew, pronounced “*halav*”) - free loot. Collectors of donations for emigration to Palestine went from house to house shouting “*dmey halav*” (“*money for milk*”). Also, on Fridays in synagogues, milk was distributed to the poor.

SHMON (from שמונה, “eight” in Hebrew, pronounced “shmone”) - a search. It is believed that in the royal prisons, every day at eight in the evening, when the prisoners were taken away for dinner

Kipish

The Hebrew word “kipush” means ‘excitement’ or “bustle.”

Shaher - maher. סחר מחר Iv. - sacher meher - trade combinations.

Kleft - jacket. חליפה.

Malina - a gathering place for thieves. מלון malon - hotel, shelter.

Hana - end. חנה - hana - to make a stop on the way, a rest.

Marvicher - a highly skilled thief. מרויחר marvicher (Yiddish) - earning money from Hebrew. מרויח marviah - earns.

Parasha - rumor. פרשה. Parasha - comment, case, scandal.

Kaif - כיף Hebrew.

Shalava - girl, prostitute. שילב, לשלב

Thieves-in-law were the highest caste in the thieves' milieu, engaged in theft and scams (redistribution of wealth, looting the looted). At the same time, the loot did not belong to the perpetrators, but went into the common fund to help all those in need.

Organized crime played a significant role in the growth of social tension in Russia and directly contributed to the establishment of a new Soviet order in the state, where criminal forces occupied leading positions.

The most striking example of a thief-in-law was Mishka Yaponchik.

He combined banditry with generosity and

nobility. He never stole from the poor, never took everything from the rich, and gave part of the money to people in need.

Yaponchik's goals coincided with those of the Bolsheviks: to help the working people. Those who were robbed were left with money “for the cab driver,” the poor were left alone, and a certain portion of the stolen money went to charity: Yaponchik helped unemployed dockworkers, orphans, and the homeless. Food and clothing were distributed to the residents of Moldavanka on his behalf.

In a society where class stratification manifests itself in a sharp contrast between the elite, who accumulate wealth, and the masses, who are deprived of equal opportunities, the roots of crime lie in the historical soil of exploitation, where social inequality provokes marginalization and rebellion against the system, making crime not an individual vice, but a reaction to systemic oppression.

Crime began to manifest itself from the moment the state was formed and regulatory norms appeared;

Before the emergence of the state, the orders of knights in Europe and the princely retinues in Russia were bands of robbers who collected tribute and cared neither for their own future nor for the future of those they robbed. But after building fortresses and establishing a permanent base of power over the surrounding population, they switched to a system of permanent plunder, which required a more long-term policy, which took the form of taxes.

Finally, when one of the bandit gangs, having destroyed or subjugated the others, created a state, robbery took on a legislative form, received moral justification, and was sanctified by the church, which received its share of power and spoils, the “church tithe.”

The forms of plunder changed, but the basis of state power, as the violence of a small but most active group of the population over the majority, remained unchanged.

David Hume argued in his essay “The Social Contract” (1748) that state power traces its origins to the violent seizure of dominance in society by a band of robbers.

Economist Mancur Olson: "The state is a gang that seizes power in a given territory. A certain line of exploitation is established, when a certain amount of wealth can be taken from the people and the necessary amount left for them to be physically able to engage in economic activity and stimulate its expansion. In these conditions, bandits get rich, and with them the people—after all, the more resources the population has, the more can be taken. Thus, the gang transforms into a full-fledged rational authority.

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Both the criminal world and early business required courage, adventurism, the ability to take risks, circumvent rules, and make quick decisions, which created a certain “synergy.”

In the 1990s in Russia, when laws were weak and institutions did not work, crime became a “shadow institution,” ensuring “order” and the redistribution of property where the state could not cope.

The criminal business attracted those who had experience and connections in the criminal world: former special services employees and military personnel. They quickly moved into the legal field, forming the first business structures and “protection” for new businesses, using their former connections and methods.

Unlike the passive majority, many former criminal leaders “integrated” into legal business, laundering capital and using their connections and methods to build new companies and create business empires.

Every country has its own mafia, but only in Russia does the mafia have its own country.